

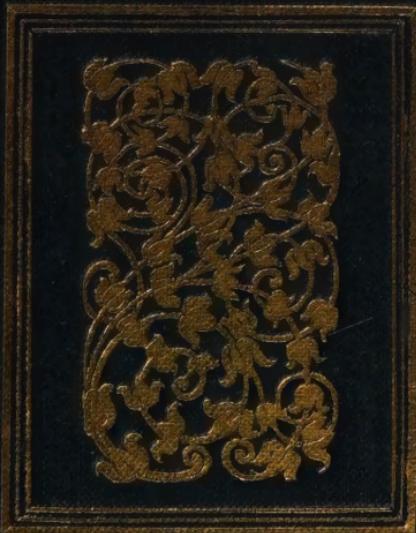
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The English Reformation

A LECTURE

WITH A PREFACE AND NOTES

BY

WILLIAM HOLDEN HUTTON, B.D.

FELLOW AND TUTOR OF S. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF ELY

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WITH

HOMAGE AND AFFECTION

P R E F A C E

THIS lecture was delivered at Fulham Palace on S. John Baptist's Day, 1899, when, by the request of the Bishop of London, I addressed the London Diocesan Branch of the Church Committee for Church Defence and Church Instruction. It had, with very slight changes, been previously read in Oxford and at Market Harborough. Some of it, too, I had said three years ago at the Church Congress at Shrewsbury. Four months after its delivery in the midlands, and for several months afterwards, it was exposed to a series of criticisms, partly anonymous, partly signed, in the local press, from Roman Catholic writers. I owe a

great debt to the editors who, by printing the letters of my critics, enlightened me as to the remarkable methods of some Roman controversialists. I will not stigmatize them: I will only say that to read such letters would astonish any trained student of history. But I have observed with delight that the persistent claim of the Church of England is at last admitted by the Romanists. They now assert that our Church is a new one—only they always omit to fix the date of its foundation: how well I remember the indignation of Mr. Freeman, when an energetic American publisher announced a book on “Thomas Cromwell, the founder of the English Church”—because we have discarded certain customs and certain teaching of the Middle Ages. Thus my critics taunted me in language of delicious self-revelation. “He burrows,” they cried, “in

the primitive Church." Of course we do! It is our whole contention, that we follow, as God guides us, the rule of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles. Our opponents raise questions about all sorts of medieval or modern details of the day, and no doubt we are quite willing to discuss the present Doctrine of Papal infallibility as contrasted with the declaration of the English Romanists in 1788 of disbelief in such an opinion, or the character of the medieval popes, or "holy water," or the use of the rosary, or any such things; but not as having any bearing on the continuity of the English Church. The Catholic Faith is defined for us in the three Creeds: we can argue seriously only on the plain issue that the Church of England obeys, and has never ceased to obey, the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and the primitive Church. As Mr. Arthur

Galton says in his book (with parts of which I find it impossible to agree) on "The Message and Position of the Church of England," "It has a continuity of essential doctrine. It has the same Scriptures, and uses the same Creeds, which it received at the beginning. Its people receive the same Sacraments, through the same Ministry. In outward form, and in unessential beliefs, it has gone through many changes, some willingly, some unwillingly ; but so has every other national Church in the West of Europe and most of all the Roman."

I have, perhaps hastily, assumed (p. 28) that the changes at the Reformation in regard to the disciplinary power of the bishops, and the ecclesiastical courts, are admitted not to have affected the continuity of our Church. I see that Father Thurston, S.J., has taken Professor Maitland's very interesting investigation of

“ Roman Canon Law in the English Church ” to have some bearing on our position. But that view I do not think can be maintained. All courts must in some sense recognize the laws which are recognized by the court to which they are willing to appeal ; but that fact has no bearing upon the history of a body which at different times has referred questions for decision to another body, external to itself. The main question certainly remains as English writers since the sixteenth century have always stated it.

There are, indeed, by-paths, perpetually diverging from the main road, which we are always tempted to pursue. It has been my aim in this very simple little lecture to adhere closely to the real question at issue. If I have used the personal pronoun, here and in the lecture, too frequently, it has simply been with

the intention of showing that I speak merely as an individual student, and that I make no claim whatever to speak for any one but myself. My readers will attach as little weight as they think fit to my opinions: they are not likely to think them less important than I do myself. I represent no one: I claim only to be a loyal member of the English Church.

I am not one of those who think that the omission of language from our Prayer-book implies the prohibition of its use, and I do not therefore feel myself forbidden to describe the English Church as Protestant. "She may be a Protestant Church," says our great living historian, "but her Protestant attitude is the complement of her Catholic history."

It is that Catholic history which English theologians have ever delighted to study, which has given us our matchless ecclesiastical

writers, which inspires those who are still with us—distinguished sons of our two ancient Universities—in the work they have done, and are doing, for the whole Church of Christ. While that history is illuminated for us by men of real and deep learning, humble teachers and students may rightly help to spread the knowledge which they have acquired through the work of their masters. Of such students at this time there is more than ever a need; and among them I venture to crave a place. Englishmen will not refuse to listen to us, I think, because we content ourselves with a humble task. There are things that need again and again to be repeated; and it is I think, for such as us, with no self-assertion, to say them.

Writing these words to-day, when the decision of the Archbishops, on the question submitted

to them of the use of incense and processional lights in the open services of the Church, is to be read in the papers, it would be almost impossible to avoid some reference to it. Happily I write before I have read or heard a word of comment on the decision; but it is clear to me that our critics under the Roman obedience will ask at once, "How does it bear on the question of your continuity?" The answer must surely be, "Not at all." It is the expression of the opinion of two candid and conscientious prelates, for both of whom English Churchmen entertain feelings of admiration and reverence such as it has been the fortune of few of their predecessors to elicit. I have no doubt that it will be exposed on historical, possibly on legal, grounds, to some damaging criticisms; it would be difficult, I think, to find any historical statements which are not thus exposed.

Some may possibly be surprised at the interpretation of the “Ornaments rubric” of 1662 by the Act of 1559 (prefixed to the Manuscript Prayer-book signed by Convocation in 1661), without any reference to the Uniformity Act of 1662. Some may say that the “rubric” of 1559 contains an explicit reference to the Act of 1559, and that the omission of such reference from the “rubric” of 1662 can hardly be presumed to be destitute of significance. Some may point out that the words “at all times of their ministration” in the “rubric,” on which such stress appears to be laid in the decision, do not occur in the Act of Parliament in accordance with which that decision is stated to be framed. But these and similar criticisms, which very likely have been made before, and will be made again, do not touch the real matter. It is interesting, and in a way im-

portant, to know what is lawful for the English Church to-day in the matter of ceremonial, and what is not; and where questions of this trivial kind, of mere details of Divine service such as incense or processional lights, are concerned, which are of great difficulty and complexity, as these certainly are, it would surely seem wise, where experts disagree, to accept and obey the opinion and decision of the highest ecclesiastical persons in the Church. It is often repeated, sometimes in an insolent manner, that decisions such as this have no coercive power, as though the clergy were persons who knew no argument but force. The more patent defect of the clergy would seem to be their delight in argument, almost to excess. But it is not a case of needed coercion: it should be a case of delighted submission. It may be hard to induce men who have given

years to the study of such questions to abandon the conclusions which they have reached, as they believe, by the methods of sound learning ; but it is certain that for such the right course would be to obtain from the lawful authority of the Church a decision, of full legal force, on the questions in dispute. Till such a decision is given, till the Church herself interprets, for example, the “Ornaments rubric,” while the discretion of the Ordinary is still untouched, it would be sad indeed if any of the clergy were to disregard the closing words of the document which has been published ;—“We entreat the clergy, for the sake of the peace of the Church, which we all so much desire, to accept our decision thus conscientiously given in the name of our common Master and Supreme Head of the Church, the Lord, Whose commission we bear.”

Coercion has, throughout the history of the English Church, ever been idle and useless. It is one of the strange revenges of time that while, in the seventeenth century, it was the Puritan clergy who were coerced because they would not use the common and open prayer according to the Prayer-book and none other, now it is members of an opposite party who are threatened with coercion. We have still, from the Puritans of Elizabeth's day, as the Bishop of London has so happily said, "the unfortunate legacy of fighting great principles over outward trifles." Let us remember the wise words of the Bishop of Oxford, and "be quite sure that what we defend is worth defending, and what we attack is worth attacking. We shall not learn it in the arena of the present controversy."

What is the bearing of all this on "con-

tinuity"? Surely that the principle of obedience to constituted authority, so strongly emphasized in the English Reformation, is one of the true marks of the historic Church. Opposition to this principle has led invariably and inevitably to heresy and schism. Private judgment has its place and its claims, but most frequently it has led to the foolish conclusion that the world would go better if it were ruled by the individual opinion of the private judge. It has been in the past, all through our history, the wisdom of the Church of England that she has set her face against this folly: so has she been saved from much that other nations have suffered. Still may it be so; and in spite of her critics, political and ecclesiastical, I, for one, believe that it will.

W. H. H.

THE GREAT HOUSE, BURFORD, OXON.,
Lammas Day, 1899.

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THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

THE subject about which I am to speak, and about which I do not pretend to say anything new, is one which is of universal interest, and of interest especially to English Churchmen ; and I venture to think that it is one which can be rationally considered among English Churchmen apart from all controversy. It is the English Reformation.

I feel very strongly that the Reformation is a fact in the history of our national Church which, reasonably considered, can only tend to draw us more closely together. I venture to

hope that as to the main points, and as regards the position which that great movement occupies in Church history, there is no real difference of opinion among English Churchmen.

We are all proud of our national Church ; we none of us doubt that she is the representative in this land of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles ; and we all feel that to prove this fact, to justify this pride, we must be able to show that she has had a continuous life. If at any time the connection of our Church with the Church of the Apostles was forcibly broken, and we had to begin anew to search out for an organization which should be to us the pillar and ground of the truth, we could not say that ours was the Society planted according to Apostolic precept in these lands, and which received our Lord's commission to preach the gospel to every creature.

Our loyalty to the past, which is one of the very highest features of our English character, our loyalty to our governors the bishops—and the claim that every one of us is heartily and truly loyal to them, because we believe that they were given to us by our Master, Christ Himself—demand that we should claim to be without breach with the historic, the Apostolic past. In other words, I believe that we all can cordially unite in those words of Archbishop Bramhall—

“I have not the least doubt that the Church of England before the Reformation, and the Church of England after the Reformation, are as much the same Church as a garden before it is weeded and after it is weeded is the same garden.”

I desire, then, on the ground of this agreement, to ask you to look the great historical

fact of our Reformation in the face, and see what it means.

I think I shall express most clearly what is the meaning of this great event in our national history if I divide what I have to say into two parts, and first ask, What was the Reformation? and secondly ask, Did it affect the continuity of the great national institution which is the grandest factor in our national history? For we must repeat, to start with, that the Church of England does claim, as every lawyer and every historian will tell you, to be the same body which—a branch of that One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church of which we speak in the Creeds—was founded on English soil in the year 597 after Christ.

First, then, What was the Reformation?

It was a long movement, beginning when Henry VII. sat on the throne and ending when

the first Parliament of Charles II. confirmed and ratified the constitution of the Church as it was established—for it had always been established—by law. It lasted, then, from about 1485 to 1662. In those centuries many great men, noble souls, strenuous fighters for the cause of right, simple saints who worshipped God and possessed their souls in patience, passed over the stage of English life. Few or none of them were without their share in the great changes that affected the land. It is impossible to think of those days without recalling the goodly company of Morton and More, the masterful Henry, the wise Elizabeth, the learned Andrewes, the saintly George Herbert, and Laud and Charles, who laid down their lives rather than abandon the sacred trust that God had given into their hands. But we must not linger on pathetic or heroic memories; let

us rather state simply, clearly, coldly, what was the work of each age and generation in the great upheaval of those two centuries.

I will state the facts concisely, and as they are, I believe, beyond dispute.

Under Henry VII. public attention was directed to three points: (1) The gross scandals in some of the monasteries, and the fact that they no longer provided the most useful way of seeking learning and religion. A reformation was begun by Archbishops Morton¹ and Warham, who dissolved several monasteries and reproved others, and by several rich benefactors, who, instead of founding new monasteries, endowed colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, receiving often the property of monasteries to help on their work. (2) The ignorance of the clergy and their opposition to the outburst of enthusiasm

¹ See note 1, p 34.

for genuine study and learning which came to England, through Italy and Germany, from the scholars of the East, the Christian Greeks of Constantinople, who had never lost the classical lore of the old world. (3) The extortion and the abuse of patronage by the Court of Rome. Of these I could give you scores of instances, but I may send any one who cares to inquire to the books of those days, to Gascoigne's "Book of Truths," or to any history of the Papal See. The Reformation was begun under Henry VII., for scholars poured into England, and where light is let in scandals cannot long remain.

Under Henry VIII. further steps were taken. Early in the reign the Church courts were reformed. Then appeals to Rome were made illegal (as had been practically done by the Constitutions of Clarendon, formulated nearly

four hundred years before); and it was also made illegal to introduce papal letters or sell the Pope's pardons or indulgences in England. Education was making itself heard in an enlightened public opinion. Then the King was declared by the Convocations of Canterbury and York, with the agreement of every bishop in England, to be "the singular protector, the only and supreme lord, and as far as is permitted by the law of Christ, even the supreme head" of the English Church. In 1534 came separation from Rome; and the Convocations, which were then, as they are now, the lawful representative bodies of the Church, declared that "the Bishop of Rome hath not by Scripture any greater authority in England than any other foreign bishop." Parliament then confirmed the Royal Supremacy. In 1536 the "authority of the Bishop of Rome" was finally extirpated by statute.

All this was legal, straightforward, perfectly clear and intelligible. The Church of England, in her lawful assemblies and through her lawful officers, rejected the power of the Pope, put forth declarations of doctrine and books to teach the people in English. These were the results of it all—

- (1) The Church of England decisively rejected the supremacy of the Pope in all matters in which it was repudiated by the law of the land.
- (2) The claims long made by King and people, and the powers exercised by them from time to time ever since the beginning of English history, were formally declared lawful by Church and State, and the Church recognized the Royal Supremacy “so far as the law of Christ allows.”
- (3) The Church of England formally dissociated itself from any action of foreign

reformers, claimed to have the right to govern and reform itself, and asserted its determination not "to separate from the unity of Christ's Catholic Church."

Of course, all this was not done without violence. The King and the Parliament took the reformation of the monasteries into their own hands out of the hands of the Archbishops, and ended by sweeping them away altogether, and sweeping their money into their own pockets. Many good men went to their death for resisting the King's will, or the law of the State. But for plain, clear, legal results, you cannot go beyond those I have mentioned.

One word more before we leave Henry VIII. People used to talk a great deal about his divorce from Catherine of Aragon and marriage to Anne Bullen. They are beginning to see how little it had to do with the real root

of the Reformation. Of course, the matter irritated a masterful king, and not unnaturally. What he asked was small in comparison with what Popes had granted in quite recent years.¹ And for his own action there was a curious parallel in France some centuries before. Philip Augustus was married by papal dispensation; his marriage was declared null by French bishops, who married him to another woman, in spite of papal prohibition, his wife still surviving. When, after several years, he retired from this second marriage, and returned to his first wife, the children of his second marriage were declared legitimate by the Pope.² Henry VIII. would certainly have been quite content had he experienced the same treatment. But the "Divorce" was not nearly so important in the English Reformation movement as has

¹ See note 2, p. 34.

² See note 3, p. 35.

been made out.¹ All it did was to irritate Henry VIII., and to irritate the English people more than ever against Rome, and to show the utter corruption of the Roman Curia. This is quite plain from the dreary volumes of unsavoury letters and pamphlets which record every phase of the case. And when this irritation was voiced by a powerful king, with a personal interest, it broke down the papal power in these lands for ever.

We go on to Edward VI. In his reign the country fell into the hands of extreme reformers, and of greedy, unprincipled statesmen. But the results of it all, taking them as I have taken the others, were simply these : that we got a Common Prayer-book in English, and that the State took a good deal more of the property of the Church, that is, the chantry

¹ See note 4, p. 35.

chapels and endowments for services for the souls of particular persons.

Then came Queen Mary. We can sum up her reign with almost equal brevity. The State, and the Church too, submitted again to the Pope. Many earnest men and women were burnt because they could not deny their faith, or accept the doctrine of transubstantiation, which the Church of England rejects. Bishops were turned out of their sees who would not accept the Pope's supremacy, clergy out of their livings who lawfully, and with sanction of Church and State, had married wives.¹

But though Parliament renewed England's subjection to Rome—and no one denies the power of Parliament to do just what it likes—the Convocations never retired from the

¹ See note 5, p. 36.

declaration of the Royal Supremacy made under Henry VIII. Indeed, it was by that very supremacy, and by no Church law, that Mary deposed the bishops consecrated under Edward VI. In the same way Mary punished clergy by depriving them of their benefices for marrying, though their marriages were authorized by statute.

Lastly, Parliament solemnly confirmed the dissolution of the monasteries by declaring that the confiscated property belonged legally to those to whom it had been given.

And now Elizabeth. Hers was the real settlement of the Church. She again, by every legal power of Church and State, freed England from Rome. Again we had our English services: the Royal Supremacy, less strongly than the Convocations had stated it in her father's reign, was reaffirmed. The bishops

who refused to accept it were deprived, as by Church law they could rightfully be. I need not describe the Church government, the Prayer-book, the Articles, under Elizabeth, because they were, speaking broadly, what they are now. There was, for a long time, a hope that we might be reconciled to the Church abroad, though we had legally rejected the Pope's "jurisdiction." There seemed good authority for saying that the Pope was even willing to recognize our Prayer-book.¹ But politics came in, the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth, and then there was war to the knife.

That brings us to the last stage of our Reformation. In Elizabeth's reign the bishops had ordered by canon (the legal enactment for the Church) that preachers should teach nothing

¹ See note 6, p. 37.

but what was agreeable to the Scriptures and had been collected therefrom by "the Catholic Fathers and ancient bishops."¹ But there was a strong party, fed largely from Scotland, Germany, and Switzerland, which wished, like the reformers of those countries, to make a complete breach with the past, to make a new Church, to break the Succession. That party grew stronger and stronger. Under James I. we won full authority for our Bible in English, and we got new canons for the Church, not superseding, but adding to, the old. Under Charles I. we got the declaration against intolerance and persecution—those curses of all times of change—which we still have in our Prayer-book to-day, prefixed to the XXXIX. Articles. But then came the triumph of the extreme party—the Puritans. Church, as well

¹ See note 7, p. 37.

as Crown, were swept away, and for fifteen years England was in religious chaos.

The most popular movement in all English history was the restoration of Charles II. and the restoration of the Church.¹ Back came the clergy to their livings, the bishops to their sees ; back came the Prayer-book, the Sacraments, Christian marriage,² everything that men and women value when they are in trouble, in penitence, or on the bed of death. Our Prayer-book is that which was re-issued in 1662. It repudiates all the extreme views of the extreme Protestants. It goes back, as you know, in its law for ornaments of the Church and the minister to the law of Church and Parliament in the second year of Edward VI. That shows us all along the continuous progress of our Reformation. It had many changes, but its

¹ See note 8, p. 37.

² See note 9, p. 38.

main work was all of one piece. It cast off the Pope's jurisdiction, it gave us an English Service and an open Bible.

Now for my second question. Did it break the continuity of the Church? There are two ways of looking at this: firstly, legally, that is, continuity of legal possession, externally; and secondly, in doctrine and discipline, theologically.

(1) Legally, historically, it is absolutely impossible to assert that the continuity was broken. All through, the laws of Church and State go on speaking of the English Church, *Ecclesia Anglicana*, just as they spoke in the time of Henry II. or in Magna Carta. The property of each particular church in each particular parish went on from rector to rector or vicar to vicar, without the slightest break, or any law, or any alteration whatever. So did

the property of cathedrals. So did all Church property. There was no law, there was no break whatever, taking it away from one body or one person, and giving it to another. The vicar of any church you like to name continued to hold his glebe, or his tithe, or whatever he had, under Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth. And the bishops: when one died or was deprived, his successor was appointed in the legal way to fill his place. Pole succeeded Cranmer, Parker succeeded Pole, and the legal forms distinctly stated the vacancy and recognized the succession.

(2) But now as to doctrine and discipline. It is quite possible that, even though the corporation of the Church remained the same, she might have broken with her past, with the Church founded in England by S. Augustine, by putting forth new teaching which would

contradict the faith once delivered to the saints.

Did she do so ?

On this matter, now, I have to speak very briefly, and I must therefore treat the subject very imperfectly ; but I will endeavour to take the chief points as clearly as I can.

I. Doctrine. What doctrines have been changed ? There are a number of minor doctrines, if I may call them so, in which changes undoubtedly occurred, such as the invocation of the saints, for instance. I do not think any reader of sixteenth and seventeenth century theology, of the writings of prominent exponents of the doctrines of the English Reformed Church, would assert that these changes were such as to affect the continuity of the Church in the slightest degree. Three points, however, do seem to me to be of primary importance.

(1) The jurisdiction of the Pope, and the "royal supremacy." Undoubtedly the Church of England entirely repudiated the Papal jurisdiction. The two Convocations in 1534 declared that the Bishop of Rome had no greater jurisdiction given him in this land by God in the Holy Scriptures than any other *foreign bishop*. In doing this they expressly repudiated any intention of varying from the congregation of Christ's Church in any things concerning the very articles of the Catholic faith of Christendom. No formal declaration has been made at any time by the English Church or State which assumes greater powers in the National Church as against the Pope than were assumed in the statutes of Provisors and *Praemunire*, more than a hundred and eighty years before even modern Roman controversialists assert that any breach of continuity

occurred. That the vast majority of the English clergy of the sixteenth century saw no change of serious importance in this repudiation of the Pope's jurisdiction and reassertion of the King's supremacy is perfectly clear. Tunstal, the Bishop of Durham, who in modern parlance could certainly be styled a "Roman Catholic," said that the meaning of the royal supremacy was—

"To reduce the Church of England out of all captivity of foreign powers, hitherto usurped therein, into the pristine estate that all Churches of all realms were in at the beginning, and to abolish and clearly put away such usurpation as theretofore the Bishops of Rome have, to their great advantage, and impoverishing of the realm and the king's subjects, of the same. . . . Would to God"—he wrote to Pole—"you had been exercised in reading the ancient councils, that you might have known from the beginning, from age to age, the

continuance and progress of the Catholic Church by which you should have perceived that the Church of Rome had never of old such a monarchy as of late it hath usurped."

And this was the opinion of the vast majority of the English clergy. Bishops, abbats, priests, took the oath of supremacy and declared that they found nothing new in it. The exceptions were distinguished, but they were very few. This was what happened at the first critical epoch. (I never quite understand when the Romanists think the breach in our continuity did occur, by the way.) At the second, the accession of Elizabeth and the second repudiation of Papal jurisdiction, I believe that less than two hundred clergymen out of over nine thousand rejected the change and were turned out of their livings. This is the decision at which Dr. Gee has arrived in his exhaustive and impressive book on the

subject. Surely that is a good test of whether the change was a revolution which affected the essence of the Church. Over nine thousand clergy, brought up in the ancient Catholic faith, had ministered during Mary's reign under the Pope's jurisdiction. Not more than two hundred of them regarded the repudiation of that jurisdiction as a vital matter. I do not understand Roman controversialists to assert that the Eastern Church, which rejects Papal rule, has destroyed its continuity. It seems to me impossible in the face of historical facts to assert that the repudiation of Papal jurisdiction broke the continuity of the Church.

(2) Of all the doctrines which concern the practical Christian life, there can be no question that the one round which most fighting surged at this time was the doctrine of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received

by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. About this I will only say that the Church of England again and again in her reformed formularies declares her intention (and I understand that "intention" is a vital point) to follow in this matter the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers. She undoubtedly and most strongly repudiates the doctrine of Transubstantiation ; but this doctrine, though enunciated in 1215, was not fully and finally defined for the Church of Rome till 1563.¹ At what date, then, did the English breach of continuity occur ?

(3) But it may fairly be said that, even admitting that no formal and demonstrable break has occurred on either side of these two points, if the Church of England ceased to continue the Christian ministry she must have broken with her past. We are all aware that

¹ See note 10, p. 38.

the present Pope has made a pronouncement on this point. That pronouncement has not altered the position of our Church in the very least degree, and it seems to have already been almost forgotten. If men study it, they certainly must learn that it is directly contrary to historical fact, and then the consequences must be, I sadly fear, an even greater breach than already exists between the Roman Church and the intellectual world. It is perfectly certain—(a) On the express statement of the Prayer-book that our “intention” was to “continue” the order of bishops, priests, and deacons, which “have been in Christ’s Church from the Apostles’ time;” (b) that if this “intention” was not carried out, through the invalidity of our rite, then the ordination of all priests, in the West up to the eleventh century, and in the East always, was also invalid, because it did not include the porrection of the instruments;

and, the form of conferring Episcopal consecration up to 1662, being taken directly from the Latin rite, and its meaning explained by the express reference to the office held by S. Timothy, the English consecrations, in the disputed time, were just as valid, no more and no less, than the Roman. The Pope's decision goes very much further than appears to have been intended. All this, however, has long ago been pointed: I refer to it only for completeness' sake.

But what *is* continuity in the matter of doctrine? We repeat, as we have always repeated, and as the Eastern Churches repeat—through their centuries of noble steadfastness, in persecution and death, which may God speedily end—that continuity of doctrine consists in loyal adherence to the Creeds and the Canons of the undivided Church. To these we have adhered since England, and since

Britain, had a Christian Church ; and to these we still adhere.

II. I have given myself only a moment in which to speak of discipline. Here it seems to me that the case is even simpler than before.

Discipline is either public and corporate or private and individual. The first consists practically in the exercise of the power of the law, the courts, and the bishops. The Church of England has never repudiated the canon law. The disciplinary powers of the bishops, and of the ecclesiastical courts, were not affected at the Reformation by new creations. I pass lightly over this, because I am not aware that any one has claimed that changes in this regard have affected the continuity of the English Church. The power of excommunication may be said to stand half-way between public and private discipline.

There is, of course, no difficulty in proving the continuous exercise of this power. True, it has fallen into disuse, but that, as it seems to me, solely from a practical reason. The class of persons who are liable to excommunication is one which nowadays would either be wholly unaffected by its exercise, or would speedily and easily obtain such spiritual privileges as they might desire in the ministration of some dissenting body, Roman Catholic or Protestant.

Of private or individual discipline I presume we have two chief instances;—one obligatory, the other voluntary. The obligation of fasting was not abolished, as all our documents show, by the Reformation. Not only did Parliamentary statutes recognize and enforce it, but the national records are full of reference to it. For instance, one of the first official acts of Archbishop Juxon after the Restoration

was to issue a licence to Secretary Nicholas to eat meat in Lent, dispensing him from the legal obligation recognized by Church and State. And the ordinance of penance with its "fruits" is, as we all know, whatever meaning we may attach to the words, recognized by our Prayer-book in explicit terms. Not a single word was said by any public authority at the Reformation against voluntary confession or the power of absolution as conferred in ordination. And it is well known that compulsory confession was of quite late growth in the Church, and the Church of England has most unmistakably repudiated it altogether. No continuity with Apostolic or patristic precedent in this matter was broken by the English Church at the Reformation. A continuity of fact may be clearly traced. There was never a time when prominent lay folk, as well as clergy, did not follow the practice, purely voluntarily,

as they thought fit.¹ Cranmer, Buckingham, Charles I., Jeremy Taylor, Queen Anne, down to those whose hearts have been so pathetically revealed to us within these last few years, Dr. Pusey, that distinguished lawyer who was one of the Church's most faithful sons, Roundell Palmer, Earl of Selborne, and that most laborious and loyal bishop, Walsham How.

I have spoken thus briefly to the fact that the continuous life of the Church of Christ in our land was not broken at the Reformation, or at any other time, by any doctrinal or disciplinary changes. I will end by saying that the more I study the history of England—and it is a great part of the work of my life to do so—the more clearly and certainly do I find this fact established. The more clearly we investigate the original authorities for our national history, the more sure do we become

¹ See note 11, p. 40.

that the idea of a severance of Church life, of a new Church, or anything, in fact, but a reformation or purging of the old Church such as you may do and have done with the House of Lords, or the House of Commons, or the legal system of the country—only it is to nobody's interest to pretend that there is any breach there—was ever supposed till quite modern times to have taken place. Truth must win in the long run. Infallibility cannot conquer knowledge. We have nothing to lose, but everything to gain—and I hope and believe we are honest enough to speak the truth, whether we gain or lose by it—everything to gain by the searching to the bottom and the publication in the fullest possible way of every fact which bears upon the changes of that troubrous time—which some of us rejoice in, and some, it may be, deplore, but all of us loyally accept—the Reformation.

We are proud of our historic Church ; we are proud of the long line of our bishops, evangelical, apostolic, learned, saintly. We are proud to obey the Church and obey the bishops. We believe that it is God who has given to us both Church and bishops, and that our loyalty to them is but part of that absolute and unquestioning loyalty which we every one of us desire, by His grace, to pay to Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

NOTES

1. AN illustration of the worst scandals may be found in the letter of Cardinal Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury and Papal legate, to the Abbat of S. Alban's, printed from his register at Lambeth, by Wilkins, "Concilia," vol. iii. pp. 632-4. But such grievous crimes as are there described were no doubt exceptional. Of the general condition of the religious houses, some idea may be obtained from the Visitations of the diocese of Norwich, and of the chapter of Southwell, both published by the Camden Society.

2. That the Pope ever granted such a dissolution of marriage as Henry VIII.'s has recently been rashly denied by Roman Catholic controversialists. It is only necessary to point to the three contemporary cases among Henry VIII.'s own kindred—those of Louis XII. of France, Queen Margaret of Scotland, and Charles Brandon Duke of Suffolk.

3. The evidence for this has, most strangely, been recently denied by Roman Catholic controversialists. It is to be found in the chronicles of the time, especially Rigord ; and the letters of legitimation were issued by Innocent III. on November 2, 1201 (*Regesta*, Potthast, 1499, 1500). It was as possible for a Pope to legitimate the issue of Henry's adultery as of Philip's.

4. I regret to differ on this point from our closest student of the history of Henry VIII.'s reign, Dr. James Gairdner, whose work all scholars regard with deep respect. In a pamphlet published since this lecture was written, he states ("The English Reformation, what it was and what it has done," p. 9) that "Roman Catholics will tell you—and, of course, Protestants will not believe them—that the Reformation was due to Henry VIII.'s desire to put away Katherine of Arragon and to marry Anne Boleyn. This is a very unpleasant origin for a new order of things in matters of religion. But I am afraid the Roman Catholics are right, and it is no use blinking a fact in history." I certainly, for one, have no desire to blink a fact in history ; but I await the evidence for Dr. Gairdner's somewhat extreme view. I find it difficult to believe that the feeling which is expressed—to mention no more names—in Chaucer, Wyclif, Gascoigne, and even by casual references in the Paston Letters ; in the action of archbishops like Morton, Warham, and Wolsey ;

in the liberal movement as represented by Foxe and Colet,—would not have led to a “godly thorough Reformation.” Dr. Gairdner would, seemingly, reply that, even if there was such a reform, it would not have led to a repudiation of the Papal claims. If this is so, how does he account for the unanimity with which the bishops accepted the declaration of the Royal Supremacy, the fact that the clergy, as a mass, found nothing new in it, and such statements as that of Tunstal as to its meaning? (See Father Bridgett’s “Life of Blessed Thomas More,” p. 347, for the passage quoted on p. 22.) On the other hand, I am quite prepared to accept words which Dr. Gairdner (in the *Guardian*, April 5, 1899) has accepted, “Henry VIII. opened the flood-gates. Then the stream could flow.”

5. Roman controversialists have recently declared that our Church cannot be continuous from the Apostles’ time because our clergy are allowed to marry. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the long period during which a married clergy existed in England, or to their existence in the Greek Church. So long as the Church of Rome allows the Uniat clergy in communion with her to be married, she cannot deny that clerical marriage is a matter which the Church has power to regulate and acknowledge.

6. See *Calendar of State Papers*, June 21, 1571, in a letter professing to be based on the statements of the Cardinal of Lorraine, Papal legate in France, and of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton. It is at least probable that the Pope was not decided in his rejection of the English Church, when he sent a "legate to persuade the Queen to allow some, at least, of her own bishops to attend the Council [of Trent], and to enter into conference with the Catholics" (see Sanders, "Anglican Schism," p. 291).

7. "But especially shall they see to it that they teach nothing in the way of a sermon, which they would have religiously held and believed by the people, save what is agreeable to the teaching of the Old or New Testament and what the Catholic Fathers have collected from this selfsame doctrine" (Canon 6 of 1571. See Gee and Hardy, "Documents Illustrative of the History of the English Church"). It is to be regretted that a recent declaration of the English Church Union appears to quote this statement in such a way as to give a false impression of its meaning.

8. I venture here to differ from my friend, Mr. Henson, who, in his amusing but bitter pamphlet, "Cui bono?" (p. 27), considers that "alone of the Reformed Churches, the Church of England has never been popular." In face of the history of the reigns of Charles II., James II., and

Anne, it seems to me impossible to maintain this statement. A few lines later on Mr. Henson admits that “after the Restoration the Church seemed for a while to be deeply rooted in the popular favour.”

9. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to remind my readers that, during the Protectorate, the use of the Prayer-book was illegal, and that no marriage was legal except one before a magistrate. Our parish registers show that Christian marriage, at any rate in church, became very rare indeed. The arrest of Evelyn and a congregation who were receiving the Holy Communion on Christmas Day, 1657, is well known. The Verney Memoirs, so charmingly edited by Lady Verney, also contain curious illustrations of the difficulties of religious Churchfolk.

10. The Lateran Council of 1215 declared as follows : “ *Una vero est fidelium universalis ecclesia, extra quam nullus omnino salvatur, in qua idem ipse sacerdos et sacrificium Jesus Christi, cuius corpus et sanguis in sacramento altaris sub speciebus panis et vini veraciter continentur, transubstantiatis pane in corpus et vino in sanguinem potestate divina, ut ad perficiendum mysterium unitatis accipiamus ipsi de suo, quod accepit ipse de nostro, et hoc utique sacramentum nemo potest conficere nisi sacerdos* ” (Mansi, “ *Concilia* ” XXII., 982 ; cf. Loofs, “ *Leitfaden zum Studien der Dogmengeschichte* ,” p. 276).

The Council of Trent, sessio xiii. caput 4 (1551), stated as follows (*De Transubstantione*): “Quoniam autem Christus redemptor noster, corpus suum id quod sub specie panis offerebat, vere esse dixit ; ideo persuasum semper in Ecclesia Dei fuit, idque nunc denuo sancta haec Synoda declarat, per consecrationem panis et vini conversionem fieri totius substantiae panis in substantiam corporis Christi Domini nostri, et totius substantiae vini in substantiam sanguinis ejus, quæ conversio convenienter et proprie a sancta Catholica Ecclesia Transubstantiatio est appellata.” I cannot help feeling that this statement is a real advance on that of the Lateran Council, and that Mr. Wakeman was right when he wrote, with the assent of theological experts, that the meaning of the word *transubstantiated* was not previously defined in accordance with the metaphysical view which believed that the consecration of the elements annihilated the substance of bread and wine and replaced it by a new substance, that of the Body and Blood of Christ (see “Introduction to the History of the Church of England,” p. 283). It is argued, I know, that the language of writers of the eleventh century shows that the words of the Lateran Council meant as much as those of the Council of Trent, but it is undeniable that they were not so interpreted by many medieval writers ; and it should be remembered that in 1079 these words of Berengarius were accepted as orthodox : “Profiteor panem altaris post consecrationem esse verum corpus

Christi, quod natum est de Virgine, quod passum est in cruce, quod sedet ad dexteram Patris ; et vinum altaris, postquam consecratum est, esse verum sanguinem qui manavit de lateri Christi."

II. I would here venture to quote the weightiest words that have been said on the subject of confession for many a day, words which all loyal churchmen will accept with complete agreement. "It is quite clear that the Church of England regards the confession of sin as a most important part of her religious system. In both Morning and Evening prayer, in the office of Holy Communion and in the Service for the Visitation of the Sick, and in the Communion Service for Ash-Wednesday, she has set before her children the necessity for the confession of sin. She has in each place asserted for her ministers the authority to pronounce to the penitent her Lord's message of absolution, and in the ordination of priests, in the most solemn words uttered at a moment of the laying-on of hands, she claims for them their share in the great commission which our Lord gave to His Apostles. 'Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven ; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.' These things cannot be gainsaid. She has likewise authorised her members to have recourse in certain cases, where any one cannot, by confession to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment and present undoing of wrong and

reconciliation with his neighbours, quiet his own conscience herein, but requires further comfort and counsel, to have recourse to the parish priest, or to 'some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word and open his grief ; that by the ministry of God's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.' This recommendation, it must be observed, is for the benefit of persons qualified to receive the Holy Sacrament, and kept back by a consciousness of unworthiness. It cannot, then, be honestly pressed into the argument for making confession a part of the discipline of the unconfirmed, or of preparation for confirmation. But the Church has not by any minute regulations defined the occasions or methods of the proceeding, thus leaving a certain amount of liberty and discretion to the person who is encouraged to adopt it. Nor has she anywhere formulated an authoritative discipline of the kind, or authorized her clergy to impose such discipline as part of her ordinary system of working. She does, on the other hand, insist in the strongest way both in the Communion Service and in the Catechism, on self-examination as a part of the preparation for the Holy Communion. A clergyman, then, is not justified by our Prayer-book in imposing confession on the young in preparation for confirmation or first Communion ; and if

in the manuals used for self-examination in communicant classes or other, any direction is to be found that implies, the obligation of specific or particular confession as necessary, or that recommends minute or suggestive examination by the clergyman before the giving of absolution, I should strongly advise the disuse of such compilations.

“I know and you know that there are considerable differences of opinion, among clergymen of discretion, zeal, and experience, as to how this matter should be dealt with, and whether the regular habit of confession and absolution, limited by the words of the Church, can be wisely encouraged. I have, personally speaking, always believed that such a regular practice is rather depreciating to the spiritual sense and to the reality of moral responsibility, weakening to the religious character accordingly, and to the unreserved and immediate sense of approach to God, and, accordingly, I should strongly protest against the idea of making it a part of the regular discipline of religious life, and against pressing it in any but exceptional cases where exceptional remedies are necessary. But I am well aware that the contrary opinion is maintained, and strongly maintained, by many men of far greater knowledge and experience than has ever come into my life; whilst I see most clearly the danger, and protest most strongly against allowing the practice in the hands of young and untried men. But

when I say this I say it with a very strong protest against the strange outcry on the subject which we are hearing to-day. I do not believe in the corrupting power or efforts of the good men who are using this as a means of blessing. I do not for a moment believe that the nations or communities that practise it lose dignity or consciousness of duty and liberty by it. I do not for a moment believe that the clergy of the Church of England are not to be trusted with the ministration of it, or that they are more tempted than any others to make a wrong use of it. I do not believe that in ordinary cases, and except where there is criminal suggestion, the cases are ordinary, a young boy or girl would be brought by confession into closer acquaintance with sin and vice than by reading the police reports in the newspapers, or the many amusing books in which vice of one sort or another constitutes the dominant note of the recital. But I cannot help feeling that the excitement which at this moment is being raised about the question, critical as it is, and unquestionably sincere as it is, amongst large classes of people, does contain certain elements of unreality ; it is so easy and pleasant to repent of other people's sins, and to expose the fallacy of other people's beliefs ; and it is a very tempting thing for people to use for party purposes agencies and influences which can, by the very fact of their own ignorance, be manipulated for ends of which they are not conscious. And it is an easy thing to accuse

the ministry of the word of complicity in the very mischiefs which it has created and is working, sometimes perhaps in unwise and hazardous ways, but really and earnestly working to prevent or to dispel or to remedy. Surely evil imaginations are a shame to any cause, and cowardly insinuations, vile imputations of corrupt intent are weapons which may not in this world recoil on those who use them, but not the less, as St. James says of the abuse of the power of speech, defile the whole body and set on fire the course of nature and are set on fire of hell. No one can read the leaflets or look at the caricatures now circulated on this without detecting a spirit that deserves such condemnation."—Charge of the Bishop of Oxford, *The Guardian*, May, 24, 1899.

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